

# Description of a person

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**Title:** Description of a person.

## Abstract

Through this article, aimed at students of English as a foreign language, an interesting guide is offered to carry out a descriptive writing of a person. Anyone who needs directions to develop a descriptive written text, will be able to find the keys to do it successfully. With a simple sequence of steps to follow, the student is given recommendations on the type of vocabulary or grammar to be used, among other useful aspects.

**Keywords:** Description, People, English

**Título:** Descripción de una persona.

## Resumen

Por medio de este artículo, dirigido a alumnos del inglés como lengua extranjera, se ofrece una interesante guía para llevar a cabo un escrito descriptivo de una persona. Todo aquel que necesite indicaciones para desarrollar un texto descriptivo, aquí podrá encontrar las claves para hacerlo con éxito. Con una sencilla secuencia de pasos a seguir, se da recomendaciones al alumno sobre el tipo de vocabulario o gramática a utilizar, entre otros aspectos de utilidad.

**Palabras clave:** Descripción, Personas, Inglés.

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Descriptive texts create an impression in the reader's mind. It is important to bare in mind that the writer expresses his or her opinion / impression of a person, place, event as he or she perceives it: the feelings that this person, place or event transmit him or her. Therefore, the content of the text will be subjective, most of the times.

However, you can also find objective descriptions with a clear purpose: offer information to the reader.

Through the choice of words, the author helps the reader to create an image in his or her mind about what is being described and makes it seem real.

Sometimes, students may find it difficult to write certain types of texts. Here, they will find an interesting guide to write descriptions.

Following these steps they will be successful when writing a descriptive text.

## BRAINSTORM

Write down the information you want to include in your composition (physical description, personality, typical behaviour). You do not have to write complete sentences.

Answer the following questions: what does he / she look like?, what is he / she like?, what does he / she do?, do you like it?

## PLANIFICATION

Organise the information into three paragraphs.

- Paragraph 1: introduce the person. Include a physical description. Explain what he / she does and if you can give details about his / her early life (biography).

Use time expressions.

- Paragraph 2: give the main facts about his / her life and character.

Use linkers, modifiers, adjectives and relative clauses.

- Paragraph 3: say what the person is doing now and his / her importance today.
- Include your opinion or others opinion about him / her.

## THINK ABOUT LANGUAGE

**1. Vocabulary:** use varied adjectives and modifiers to avoid using “very” and “good” all the time. They will make your description rich and attractive.

It is important to bare in mind that sometimes you want to use more than one adjective to describe someone and his or her appearance.

What happens is someone’s hands are both small and thin? Would you write *small and thin hands*? Or... *thin and small hands*?

What is the correct order of adjectives in the English language? The preferred one is the following:

- Opinion (pretty, gorgeous, ugly...)
- Size (small, big, huge...)
- Shape (long, square, round...)
- Age (new, old, young...)
- Colour (blue, red, pink...)
- Origin (Spanish, French, British...)
- Material (plastic, glass, paper...)
- Purpose (painting, driving, cooking...)

Let’s see some examples:

Mi nice is a beautiful, young, Spanish girl.

The novelist was an ugly, tall, thin man.

He has got beautiful, big, round, brown eyes.

Examples of adjectives: dynamic, kind, reserved, attractive, sociable, two-faced, bossy, etc.

Examples of modifiers: a bit, extremely, rather, slightly, etc.

## 2. Grammar:

- Relative clauses: He is a quiet person, which is something I admire.
- Comparative and superlative form of the adjective: She is the most intelligent student in the class.
- Present simple – past simple / adverbs of frequency: He never helps his friends.

## 3. Alternatives to the verb “to be”:

She / He looks, seems, wears, etc.

## 4. Useful expressions such as:

- The first thing you notice is his / her...
- He / She is in his / her mid 20s.
- I respect / admire him / her because...
- The thing I most like about him / her is ...

## 5. Linking words

CONTRAST	ADDITION
But However, Although Despite / In spite of	Also Moreover, In addition, Furthermore,

## WRITE

Write your composition taking into consideration the previous steps.

## AFTER WRITING

Check your spelling and grammar structures. Make sure you have described the person as completely as possible giving details.

## EXAMPLE

"Name of the person" is a 50-year-old woman who was born in Madrid to a wealthy family.

She is very pretty (after having undergone some plastic surgery) and always worried about her physical aspect and what others may think of her. Because of this, she always wears expensive outfits.

Her wavy, blond hair provides her a Hollywood actress look; she makes me think of Marilyn Monroe whenever I see her coming into our office.

When she was a child, she wanted to be a teacher. But her father, who was a very important doctor and pretty influential at the time, forced her to study a degree in Law. His desire was to see her daughter becoming a powerful judge.

Thirty-two years ago, when she was eighteen, there was no option for a woman to disobey her father and, therefore, he started studying Law.

Surprisingly enough, she became very passionate about her classes; she started to study very hard to obtain the best grades in her class and to make her father proud of her.

She had and still has a strong character which helps her achieve her purposes and, nowadays, she owns the most profitable firm of lawyers in town.

However, stubborn and hard-working as she is, she never forgot her dream of becoming a teacher. Currently, she is attending university lessons to make her dream come true.

This is what I most admire of her, my boss. She was able to study a degree which did not really appeal her and be the best at it. What is more, now aged 50, she is still pursuing her dreams and I am sure that she will also be a wonderful teacher in a few years' time.

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